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Profile

Volume XXVI
Edition I
Fall 2021

For Alumni, Parents, and Friends of the University of Minnesota Morris

**ERICKSEN NAMED
ACTING CHANCELLOR**

**Rentz Family
Marks Four
Generations
at UMN Morris**

**A MODEL FOR
LIVING AND LEARNING**
campaign concludes, leaving a lasting impact



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LAND ACKNOWLEDGMENT

By offering this land acknowledgment, we affirm tribal sovereignty and express respect for Native peoples and nations.

The University of Minnesota Morris is located along *Owobapte Wakpa*—a place from which Dakota turnips have been dug river—on the edge of *mashkode akiing*—prairie land. This land has been cared for and called home by the Dakota people, and later the Ojibwe people and other Native peoples from time immemorial. Our state's name, Minnesota, comes from the Dakota name for this region, *Mni Sota Makoce*—the land where the waters reflect the skies.

Acknowledging the land and our history in this place is an offering of solidarity with and respect for Native nations and peoples. In doing so, we—The University of Minnesota Morris—reaffirm our commitment to our responsibilities rooted in the history of our campus site as a Native American boarding school, our distinctive mission as a public liberal arts college within Minnesota's land-grant university, and our recognition as a Native American-Serving Nontribal Institution.

GIVING TO MORRIS

In partnership with the University of Minnesota Foundation, gifts designated to UMN Morris are received by and invested in the Morris campus. The Foundation serves as the legal, charitable entity for the University system. For more information on giving to UMN Morris, contact:

Susan Schmidgall, senior director of advancement
320-589-6160 | sschmidg@morris.umn.edu

Bill Robb, senior development officer
320-589-6387 | billrobb@morris.umn.edu

Erin Christensen, development officer
320-589-6067 | erinc@morris.umn.edu

Jennifer Zych Herrmann, development officer
320-589-6048 | zychja@morris.umn.edu

Editorial Staff

Jennifer Zych Herrmann '00, editor

Kari Adams '03, graphic artist

Leah Christian '23, student photographer

Contributing Writers

Sue Dieter '86

Aaron King '09

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Update your address at
alumni.morris.umn.edu/stay-connected
320-589-6066
alumni@morris.umn.edu

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Profile Mission

Profile connects alumni and friends of the University of Minnesota Morris with informative, engaging, and enjoyable stories about campus life and beyond that reflect the value and success of the liberal arts education model, enabling our audience to act as proud advocates of the institution they know and love.



Students, faculty, staff, and friends wished Michelle Behr bon voyage at an adventure-themed picnic on the occasion of her retirement as chancellor. Behr served as chancellor for four and a half years. Student Body Vice President Dylan Young '23 presented a gift from the students—a "Chancellor Behr bear," wearing a replica of Behr's academic regalia, shown here.

Read about the campus's plans for the future on page 6.

UMN MORRIS ANNOUNCES RESULTS OF CAMPAIGN

In early September Acting Chancellor Janet Schrunk Ericksen announced the results of the University of Minnesota Morris “A model for living and learning” campaign, which totaled \$31.67 million, or 151% of the original goal. The UMN Morris campaign was part of the overall University of Minnesota “Driven” campaign that began 10 years ago.

Ericksen stressed that broad donor support was essential to reach this historic milestone. “Because of the generosity of alumni and friends, Morris will continue to lead as a model for living and learning long into the future. We’re increasing access and opportunities for students, supporting faculty leadership, building beautiful smart spaces, and investing in regional resilience.”

This private giving support will be invested in the present and future of UMN Morris, including:

- 534 new scholarship awards, including the Student Assistance Grant for Emergencies, which provides quick response grants to students for short-term financial emergencies;
- The Morton Gneiss Professorship for Environmental Sciences, the first named professorship for the campus, which will start in the fall of 2023; plans for additional endowed professorships;
- New and enhanced campus facilities, including the Morris Community Softball Complex, the *Nokoomis Nibii Equay* (Grandmother Water Woman) sculpture, and the Edward J. and Helen Jane Morrison Performing Arts Center;
- A state-of-the-art EcoCenter, a living laboratory to be built at the EcoStation near Ashby on land given to UMN Morris; and
- An increase in the UMN Morris endowment from \$10 million to \$23.5 million.

Ericksen is excited by the lasting impacts of this campaign: “This shows that UMN Morris has an extraordinary community of supporters who value the liberal arts as well as our campus commitment to and leadership in sustainability.”



A model for living and learning

The campaign for the University of Minnesota Morris

See inside back cover for more information.



MORRIS CHALLENGE GETS DIRECTOR

Doug Reed has been named director of the Morris Challenge, a new program that will work with teams from rural communities to tackle challenges facing rural areas. Reed says, “My first step is building awareness for the Challenge and getting people excited about rural development.” The Morris Challenge will prioritize problems chosen by community consensus—Reed said this might include affordable housing, healthcare, small business support, and retention of young people via economic and cultural investment.

Having grown up in rural Illinois, Reed and his entire family recently moved to Morris. As a new community member, he speaks highly of Morris’s past successes. “Morris is a revelation—better than advertised. People work together in the spirit of partnership and cooperation, and everyone thrives when people lock arms and get things done together. I look forward to sharing our stories with other rural communities.”

Morris’s unique issues are important to many stakeholders in the Challenge. Bryan Herrmann ’01, vice chancellor for finance and facilities, says, “The flexibility of the Challenge, with new problems proposed each year, is important. Issues change, and a solution for Morris isn’t necessarily going to be a solution for someone in California.” He pointed to projects like the Regional Fitness Center and the new softball complex as examples of community cooperation, something he hopes to see more of in the Challenge. “A lot of it comes from the Morris Model,” he says, referring to the community plan, created in 2018, for reducing energy consumption. “Sustainability, practical solutions, and community cooperation—that’s what I’m hoping to see.”

The Morris Challenge was the brainchild of retired chancellor Michelle Behr. While the Challenge’s planned flexibility makes it difficult to predict what solutions it may bring, Behr had this to say about its future: “In my wildest dreams, it will become a national competition creating viable solutions for rural communities worldwide. People make the conscious choice to live in rural areas for the quality of life and the community. We want the Challenge to be a model for what can be done in and for those areas.”

Acting Chancellor Janet Schrunk Ericksen is also excited about the Challenge. “The university has always had a unique and inspiring connection to the Morris community, and we can learn a lot about how people here come together to solve problems.” She specifically referenced the Morris Theater Cooperative, which bought the town theater in 2007 and turned it into a volunteer-run business. “I hope the Morris Challenge will help students become invested in the community and think about the ways their actions can help others. And I hope the solutions that emerge will show everyone the real ingenuity and passion that Morris residents already know is here.”

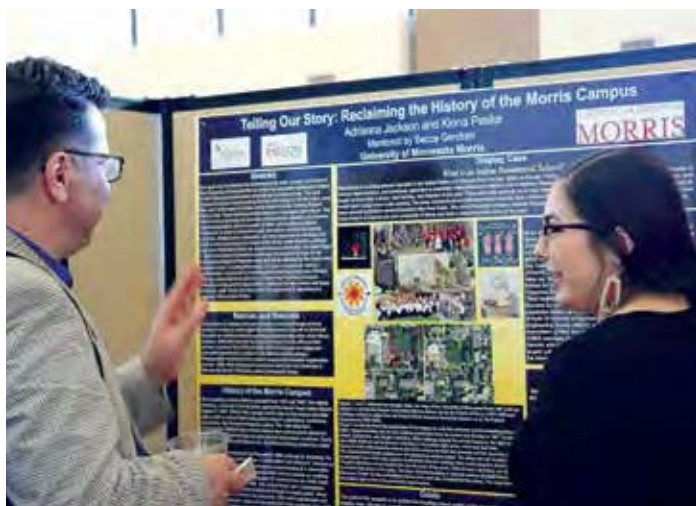
CO-CURRICULAR OPPORTUNITIES FUND HELPS GIVE STUDENTS COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE

Support from alumni and friends has provided a steady reminder that the impact of a UMN Morris education is long and deep, lasting well beyond the challenges of any particular moment.

Liberal arts colleges like UMN Morris provide an education that is increasingly important. Broad skills matter, according to a recent survey of hiring authorities, and “completion of active and applied learning experiences gives job applicants a clear advantage.”

The Co-Curricular Opportunities Fund at UMN Morris directly supports student success by helping students take advantage of underpaid or unpaid internships and other high-impact experiences. The Co-Curricular Opportunities Fund also helps elevate the role of experiential learning in a liberal arts education, building opportunities in broad skills. “We know that whatever a student majors in, engagement with writing, reading, languages, philosophy, art and art history, music, theatre, and communication enriches lives and strengthens graduates’ ability to contribute to their communities,” says Janet Schrunk Ericksen, acting chancellor.

No matter where student interests lie, the support the Co-Curricular Opportunities Fund is there to provide the financial support to allow students take opportunities they may not have otherwise been able to take due to financial restraints.



THE POWER OF

As the *A model for living and learning* campaign concludes, donor generosity fuels new and existing projects.



A MODEL FOR LIFE-CHANGING STUDENT EXPERIENCES: LOEK-RICE-TITUS FAMILY SCHOLARSHIP

Kathleen Rice and Gregory Loek have established an endowed scholarship, the Loek-Rice-Titus Family Scholarship, through UMN's Bentson Scholarship Challenge.

Inspiration for the scholarship, which will live on in perpetuity, comes, in part, from their daughter, Ellen Titus '15, and her experience at University of Minnesota Morris.

"At Morris, there were so many people interested in so many different things," says Titus, who earned degrees in biology and studio art. "It was one of the reasons I fell in love with the student and faculty communities. I think it would have been harder to meet people who were doing both biology and art at a larger school."

The Bentson Foundation began in 1956 when UMN alumni Larry and Nancy Bentson, intended to "benefit promising students and their futures and to preserve the integrity of local arts organizations and public health." For Kathleen and Gregory, the vision of the Bentsons was inspiring.

"We never even considered establishing an endowed scholarship because we assumed it would require hundreds of thousands of dollars. When we looked into it we were surprised to find that the minimum investment was not as high as we thought, with ways to start small and build it up over time that worked better with our financial situation. We would encourage interested people to check out the options available."

The opportunity from the Bentson Foundation, the positive experiences of their daughter, and the generous spirit of the Kathleen and Gregory are at the heart of this scholarship gift. Rice shared, "Youth are the future. You're investing in the future of everything. These kids who are in college now are hopefully going to go out and change the world in ways we can't imagine." Loek added, "You have to recognize you didn't do it on your own. People, schools, and communities helped you along the way. People around you encouraged you to keep following your dreams."

Their daughter Ellen's dreams have led her to do ecological research in North Carolina after receiving her Masters degree in biology at East Carolina University, and she continues to pursue art every chance she gets.

A MODEL FOR FACULTY LEADERSHIP: THE MORTON GNEISS PROFESSORSHIP IN ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCES

The University of Minnesota Morris announced a named professorship, the first of its kind at the Morris campus, the Morton Gneiss Professorship in Environmental Sciences. Named for the four-billion-year-old bedrock beneath Minnesota, the position was funded by anonymous alumni donors. "Our interests are rooted in nature and the outdoors," says one of the donors. "In recent years, we've become concerned about ecosystem interrelationships, climate change, and anthropologic extinctions." They went on, "We hope that by helping to hire an environmental sciences professor at UMN Morris, some terribly brilliant person will make an innovation or discover a complex relationship in nature that meaningfully mitigates climate change or helps humanity adapt to change."

Peh Ng, acting vice chancellor for academic affairs and dean, says, "This endowed professorship gives the person selected for the position opportunities to lead one of the nation's premier environmental science programs at a public liberal arts college, to lead new initiatives in curriculum development and research opportunities for the environmental science faculty and students, and to create partnerships with UMN Morris and its surrounding communities on projects related to the environment."



POSSIBILITY



A MODEL FOR BEAUTIFUL, SMART SPACES: MORRIS COMMUNITY SOFTBALL COMPLEX

A complex with two softball fields and concession stand/restroom/press box facilities has been built for use by UMN Morris, Morris Area Schools, and the Morris community.

Drawing upon the history of joint-use facilities in the Morris community, Vice Chancellor for Finance and Facilities Bryan Herrmann '01 saw another opportunity for collaboration. "We worked with the city's park board and the school boards to figure out how to construct a modern complex." The next phase of the project will add a third field and other features.

"This project is a huge resource for our Morris Area School and Morris Cougar student athletes. It's a beautiful complex that will attract future students and families to our community. When the community rallies around projects such as this, it has an impact on generations to come," says Matt Johnson '03, UMN Morris Director of Intercollegiate Athletics. And it was all made possible by private donors. "It's an investment into our community," says Scott Arndt, Director of Human Resources at Superior Industries, speaking to the company's donation. "And it's an opportunity for people from surrounding communities to see what an amazing town we have. After games and tournaments, you see busy streets. Restaurants and gas stations thrive with people buying snacks for the family at the field. They drive by campus looking at a potential college for their children. Hotels are filled with families. The benefits of a place that brings families to our community have exponential value to Morris businesses and the school."

A MODEL FOR REGIONAL RESILIENCE: ECOCENTER AT THE ECOSTATION

With the help of generous donors, progress is being made on funding for the new EcoCenter to be built on the 140-acre EcoStation near Ashby, Minnesota. With both indoor and outdoor spaces for teaching, learning, and research, the EcoCenter will be a vital resource for students engaging in environmental learning and the liberal arts.

James Gay, one of the visionary donors to the EcoCenter, says he was interested in the project because, "I spent 18 years teaching kids about the Earth, and it was the most satisfying and fun thing I've done with my life. I'd want to spend time at the EcoCenter. I'd want to study there."

The EcoCenter will play a central role in the EcoStation's mission to provide a campus learning laboratory dedicated to promoting environmental stewardship through research, reflection, and discovery. As part of UMN Morris's ongoing commitment to environmental education and stewardship, the facility and the land on which it will reside will also serve and inspire students of the arts, such as musicians, writers, and visual artists. "Nestled among ponds and prairie grasses, forest and farmland, the EcoCenter will foster a culture of exploration and innovation and contribute to an appreciation of and respect for the environment," said Acting Chancellor Janet Schrunk Ericksen.



JANET SCHRUNK ERICKSEN NAMED ACTING CHANCELLOR



Janet Schrunk Ericksen has been named the acting chancellor for the Morris campus by University of Minnesota president Joan Gabel. Erickson assumed the role on July 1, 2021, following Chancellor Michelle Behr's retirement. Behr retired at the end of June after four and a half years of leadership on the Morris campus. Erickson has taught and led at Morris for the past 23 years, most recently as vice chancellor for academic affairs and dean.

"The [Morris] campus has a strategic plan to reach and maintain our mission to be a national leader in collaborative and innovative 21st century liberal arts education," Erickson said. "Chancellor Behr leaves the campus in a favorable position to successfully fulfill those strategic commitments. As such, my role will be to continue that momentum."



Erickson has named Peh Ng as acting vice chancellor for academic affairs and dean. Ng has been a mathematics professor at Morris for 27 years and has been chair of the Division of Science and Mathematics for the past 10 years.

Ng said that this is an extremely important time for Morris and she will work closely with the other vice chancellors and campus leaders to continue the vital work on the campus's strategic vision and plan.

"We have a lot to do, but we have dedicated and capable leaders, faculty, staff, and students on this campus who are truly committed to our liberal arts mission and providing outstanding opportunities for our students," Ng said.

Associate Professor of Biology Rachel Johnson has been named interim chair for the science and math division. Johnson joined the Morris faculty in 2013 and in 2020 earned the UMN Morris Alumni Association Teaching Award.

Johnson considers this as an opportunity to gain a better perspective on how the science and math division works as part of both the campus and the University system. She felt confident in seeking the position because "Peh and Janet have set examples in effective leadership."

These transitions at the Morris campus are happening at the same time that the University of Minnesota Board of Regents and administrative leadership have launched a new systemwide strategic plan. The plan, MPact 2025, reflects a deepened commitment to research, teaching, and service, open access to opportunity, and forward-thinking innovation to advance the University's land-grant mission and impact the world. Erickson recently presented information to the Board of Regents highlighting how Morris's campus commitments intersect with MPact 2025's five overarching commitments and honor the University's core commitment to student success.

The Morris campus commitments are:

- Public liberal arts for the future—building the model 21st-century public liberal arts college.
- Excellence for everyone—fostering capacity with respect to community, culture, climate, and governance.
- Vital campus community—ensuring a sustainable and stable University community.
- Engaging with the region, state, and beyond—Morris as a leader and partner for tomorrow.

The campus will also continue to focus on recruiting a diverse and sustainable student population. With a target enrollment of 1,700 degree-seeking students, efforts include enhanced recruitment of local students from traditionally underserved backgrounds, regaining momentum in international student enrollment, and expanding access and support for transfer students.

Erickson concluded that work toward our core commitments will "amplify UMN Morris's place as a center for education engaged with the region, state, nation, and world, and solidify our role within the University of Minnesota system so that we can strengthen and be strengthened by the system campuses."

To assist with the transition and explore potential collaborations across the UMN System that will benefit UMN Morris and the University as a whole, Mary Holz-Clause, chancellor of the University of Minnesota Crookston, has assumed the role of acting executive chancellor for Crookston and Morris. Both campuses have already collaborated closely and include a shared registrar and admissions team.

Gabel has said the University will wait until mid-2022 before beginning a search for the Morris campus's next chancellor.



As one year ends...



Graduates from the classes of 2020 and 2021 were able to celebrate in person, albeit with fewer guests than usual, in May 2021. Minnesota Lieutenant Governor Peggy Flanagan served as (virtual) speaker, and Regent Mike O. Kenya presented the graduates with their degrees.

...another begins.



In late August, after a typically busy Welcome Week, classes began again, with 96 percent of students taking classes in person.



UMN MORRIS AND UMN CROOKSTON COLLABORATE TO STRENGTHEN RECRUITMENT

In February the University of Minnesota Morris and the University of Minnesota Crookston announced a collaboration in the area of admissions. This collaboration will strengthen each campus's enrollment in person and online while allowing them both to provide more effective and efficient recruitment operations.

The collaboration creates three operations teams to serve both campuses simultaneously:

- First-Year and Transfer Student Recruitment
- Relationship Management and Events
- Operations and Online Recruitment

Operational changes will include implementing increased automation and workflow, shared joint positions, and centralized services.

In addition to promoting inter-campus relationships and efficiencies, this collaboration will allow each institution to focus on and leverage its distinctive strengths. UMN Crookston excels in offering hands-on-experiential learning opportunities. UMN Morris is a leader in liberal arts education.

The two offices began shared recruitment work in spring 2021, with more fully combined recruitment and processing efforts secured for the fall 2022 entering class.

MCPHEE AND LACKEY EARN HORACE T. MORSE AWARDS

Professor of Computer Science Nic McPhee and Professor of English Michael Lackey have earned Horace T. Morse awards, the University of Minnesota Alumni Association Award for Outstanding Contributions to Undergraduate Education. The award honors excellence in undergraduate education across the University of Minnesota.



Each year since 1965, the Horace T. Morse–University of Minnesota Alumni Association Award for Outstanding Contributions to Undergraduate Education (Morse–Alumni Award) has been given to a select group of teachers who reflect the University’s emphasis on the importance of high quality undergraduate education.

Lackey’s nomination celebrates his “exemplary record of pedagogical successes, a record that challenges us to reimagine what undergraduates can accomplish with our help.”

“The idea that it is the educator’s responsibility to inspire students to value and redefine thinking is the cornerstone of my teaching,” writes Lackey. The scholar of biofiction—literature where the protagonist is named after a real-life person, and the author fictionalizes that historical figure—has shared his love of the genre with his students and includes them in his research.

McPhee’s nomination demonstrates how he “empowers students to develop their persistence, confidence, and expertise.” He sees his award as a tribute to the entire UMN Morris community. “Their commitment to high-quality undergraduate education is a wonderful thing, and working with great students, and remarkable faculty and staff colleagues both supports and motivates the work that I do,” says McPhee.



UMN MORRIS CELEBRATES TWO FULBRIGHT FINALISTS

Breanna Dragseth '21 and Rose Schwietz '13 were awarded Fulbright U.S. Student Research Grants to further their studies.

Dragseth works in biology, chemistry, and environmental studies. She was awarded the Fulbright grant to continue her studies in designing, synthesizing, and testing materials for the removal of excess nutrients from freshwater bodies. Dragseth will study in Ireland and aims to become a more well-rounded veterinarian through her research observing Irish biodiversity and its responses to nutrient levels.

Schwietz will travel to Nepal to research theatre arts, namely traditional forms of dance-drama and the stories the dances tell. Schwietz intends to use her training in the Suzuki acting method to research and document the techniques, purposes, and impact of traditional Mani Rimdu and Ghatu dance-drama, both to catalog these fading arts and to explore how cultural storytelling forms inform contemporary Nepali theater.

DEAN & NG EARN PRESIDENT’S AWARD FOR OUTSTANDING SERVICE

Two members of the University of Minnesota Morris community earned the University of Minnesota President’s Award for Outstanding Service in spring 2021: LeAnn Dean, director of Briggs Library, and Peh Ng, chair of the Division of Science and Mathematics and professor of mathematics.

Dean has worked at Briggs Library for more than 30 years, and she’s prioritized students the entire time. “In the Briggs Library Operating Principles,” says Naomi Skulan, metadata and technical services coordinator at Briggs Library, “LeAnn states that student success is the first priority of the library. She advocates for student representation in all aspects of campus life and urges campus leaders to listen to students’ needs.” Dean has helped the library evolve in response to student needs, expanding educational resources and affordable content as well as advocating for student representation in the library’s Collection Enhancement Grants. She has also served on many campus and University committees and task forces.

Ng’s nominators noted her many overlapping vectors of service: to students, to UMN Morris, and to the community and state at large. Ng has participated in mentored research with at least 24 undergraduate students. Nominators noted Ng’s expansive knowledge of campus policy, her recruitment efforts, and her networking meals. And leading through service goes beyond the university setting. Ng, along with student research assistants, has worked on a number of projects for the local community.

Nancy E. Carpenter, professor emeritus of chemistry, succinctly summarizes Ng’s approach, saying, “She has never forgotten why she serves and why she is an educator: her students. Even as a division chair, a member or chair of a search committee, or member of a governance committee, she has in the back of her mind how she can make things better for students.”



AMERICAN INDIAN BOARDING SCHOOL HISTORY AND HEALING

The recent tragic news of the discovery of thousands of unmarked graves at residential schools across Canada has brought attention to our own history as a campus built on the site of two such schools. The University of Minnesota Morris is committed to continuing our research into the history of the schools that operated at this site and to collaboration with Tribal Nations as we move forward.

Archival research has revealed no specific evidence of a cemetery for the burial of children who died while at the Morris schools. We can also not say with certainty, however, that no such cemetery existed. Individuals on campus and in Tribal offices are completing more research, and Acting Chancellor Janet Schrunk Ericksen has met with Tribal Historic Preservation Officers (THPOs) and communicated with Tribal Chairs about visiting Tribal councils to share this research.

As we identify and act on next needed steps regarding the possibility of unidentified burial sites in Morris, we will continue to honor Tribal sovereignty and remember the children who were here as beloved members of their families and communities. We will continue to be guided by our American Indian Advisory Committee, Dakota and Ojibwe elders, and the National Native American Boarding School Healing Coalition, of which we are a part.

With the guidance of our campus American Indian Advisory Committee and Dakota and Anishinaabe elders, UMN Morris hosted a ceremonial gathering to inaugurate an era of truth telling, understanding, and healing regarding the history of this land in April 2019. It was an important step in remembering the children and their families and communities that have been negatively impacted by the boarding schools on this site and all those across Minnesota and our nation. We have held subsequent campus gatherings for truth telling and healing in November 2019 and November 2020. The third annual gathering for healing will be held in October. Welcome Week this year included a new educational session that provided understanding of this place as Dakota and Ojibwe land, discussed the history of the boarding schools here, and gave context for the connections of this history to today at UMN Morris as a federally designated Native American-Serving Nontribal Institution. We are planning a teach-in for November, to increase understanding of the history and continuing impacts of Native American boarding schools.

Earlier this year Secretary of the US Department of the Interior Deb Haaland announced the Federal Indian Boarding School Initiative, launching a formal and detailed investigation of the Indian boarding schools that existed in the US between 1869 and the 1960s. We welcome and will support this federal initiative. We will not, however, delay our current work.



1887

The Sisters of Mercy, an order of the Roman Catholic Church, established the Morris American Indian Boarding School on this site. The school closed in 1896.

1897

The school reopened as The Morris Industrial School for American Indians, under the management of the federal government.

1909

As the US government closed off-reservation boarding schools, the campus was transferred to the State of Minnesota with federal law and state statute mandating that an educational institution be maintained on the site and American Indian students “shall at all times be admitted to such school free of charge for tuition and on terms of equality with white pupils.”

UMN MORRIS AWARDED \$1.5M FOR NATIVE AMERICAN STUDENT SUCCESS

The University of Minnesota Morris was recently awarded a five-year grant from the U.S. Department of Education to support Native American student success. Totalling \$1.5 million, the award will support transition to college, first-year experience programming, access to cultural resources, and student wellbeing at UMN Morris.

The grant continues and builds on the Native American Student Success (NASS) program established in 2015. It supports a Native American-student-centered transition to college and an enhanced first-year experience for new Native students. It will provide cultural representation, role models, and supportive practices for Native American students at UMN Morris as well as faculty/staff professional development opportunities to build

a more culturally informed, supportive campus climate. The project will also address the growing impact of student mental health challenges in interrupting students' college progress by increasing understanding of intergenerational trauma, providing greater access to culturally relevant resources, and adding support for Native American students' wellbeing.

A second U.S. Department of Education NASNTI-supported project is being launched to build cooperation between tribal colleges in Minnesota and UMN Morris, including transfer pathways for tribal college graduates to earn BA degrees.

This activity is supported wholly or in part by the US Department of Education Native American-Serving Nontribal Institutions (NASNTI) program.



Mike Rentz '94, Connor Rentz '21, Steve Rentz '70, and Delmar "Bud" Rentz '93

UMN MORRIS LEGACY SPANS FOUR GENERATIONS

Connor Rentz graduated this spring, representing the fourth generation of the Rentz family to graduate from the University of Minnesota Morris.

When Connor Rentz '21 was in high school, contemplating where to go to college, he knew he wanted to get out of his hometown of Duluth. But he also wanted to stay in Minnesota, so he applied to both the University of Minnesota's Twin Cities and Morris campuses. Ultimately Connor decided to attend Morris. "The smaller size and more intimate feel of Morris would be the better fit for me."

When he graduated this spring with a double major in chemistry and philosophy, Connor was the fourth generation of the Rentz family to have earned a degree from UMN Morris.

Connor's parents Mike Rentz and Leslie Clapper-Rentz graduated from UMN Morris in 1994.

The year before Mike and Leslie graduated, Mike's grandfather, and Connor's great-grandfather, Delmar R. "Bud" Rentz, received his bachelor's degree from UMN Morris.

Mike's father, Steve, was the first in the Rentz family to attend and graduate from UMN Morris. "I graduated in 1970 after graduating from Morris High School in 1966. My wife Wanda

(Kopel) Rentz was part of the UMN Morris class of '71, but did not graduate until 1972," Steve shared. "We were married during college, and, when I went into the service, she accompanied me. When I was sent on deployment, she returned to Morris and completed her studies. Interestingly, she was able to complete some of her classes 'remotely' while we were living in Mississippi."

Steve shared that his father, Bud, always intended to go to college, but those plans were interrupted by World War II. But he remained determined and started taking classes. "I am sure in the early '90s as a 65 year old small business owner, he brought an interesting perspective to his classmates and challenges to his professors. I remember him saying that he was always grateful to my brother, John, for tutoring him through some of the required classes. His goal was to graduate before his first grandson graduated from the University of Minnesota Morris."

John graduated from UMN Morris in 1988, and had his father as a classmate in his modern grammar class during his senior year. He remembers that when his dad took a geology class,

his mom, Colleen, was able to tag along on the field trips. “The course culminated in a pool party for the class at our home. I teased my dad that he was worried about me throwing parties at our house while I was in college and in the end it was him who he had to worry about.”

John also noted that his dad had earned some credits through the University Without Walls program before he started taking in-person classes. “Who would have known UMN Morris was one of the original virtual universities?”

Further, John is grateful that his parents were strong supporters of the campus throughout their lives. Bud served as one of the three original members of the West Central Educational Development Association (WCEDA), a citizen action group that lobbied the state legislature in the late 1950s to establish a college campus in Morris. “Indirectly Connor’s degree is realizing [my dad’s] vision to support UMN Morris to create leaders like Connor, who will lead and create a better world for future generations.”

Other members of the Rentz family have attended UMN Morris, including Connor’s uncle, Brian, his great-uncle Paul, and a cousin, Leslie. So Connor has heard many stories about his family’s adventures in college.

His parents both spoke fondly of their time at the Morris campus, specifically mentioning late night stops at Don’s for grilled cheese and milkshakes as well as the ‘all you can eat’ buffet at Pizza Hut.

Connor’s legacy experience at UMN Morris includes taking classes from the same faculty as his parents and uncles.

“Both of my parents took OChem from Nancy [Carpenter] when they were here as biology students with chemistry minors. Although when I asked Nancy about them she seemed to remember them being much better OChem students than they said they were. While they weren’t huge fans of OChem as a subject, they both really liked Nancy, and were very glad that I was able to take some classes from her before she retired. On a similar note, I found out Seung-Ho Joo, who taught my

Intellectual Community course (War and Terrorism) my freshman year, was one of my Uncle Brian’s favorite professors when he was a student here.”

Connor says the story of his grandfather, Steve, both attending and helping to construct parts of the campus is a family highlight. Steve filled in the details: “While attending UMN Morris I worked at the local concrete plant and delivered concrete to the now ‘old’ science building, Humanities Fine Arts building, the PE Center, the boiler plant and other projects that were constructed at the time. I remember days of delivering a load then parking the concrete truck in the parking lot while I ran to a class then went back to work. Ray Lammers (my adviser) told me that I would be the only guy in the history of the school to graduate with a degree in concrete.”

Connor has stories of his own to share when the family conversation turns to UMN Morris.

“A few particularly memorable highlights of my time here include the various field trips for my Chemistry of Sustainable Energy class, taught by Nancy Carpenter. One time we toured a coal power plant in South Dakota, and another time we toured a waste management/recycling facility somewhere in the area. Both of those were way more interesting than one might expect, although the smell from the recycling facility was exactly what one would expect, and then some.”

Connor summed up his tenure as a UMN Morris student, saying that his experience definitely exceeded anything he would have been able to expect as a high school student.

“The faculty and staff are incredibly caring, friendly, and knowledgeable, and I graduated with a great group of students. The small class sizes and intimate feel of the campus facilitated both my academic and personal growth far more than I could have known, and I am extremely grateful that I made the decision to attend the University of Minnesota Morris.”

His grandfather, Steve, echoes those sentiments, “We are especially proud that Connor decided to attend UMM and become a fourth generation Rentz to graduate.”



Rentz family and friends at Commencement 2021. Back row: Michael Rentz '94, Joseph Rentz, Connor Rentz '21, Leslie Clapper-Rentz '94, Stephen Rentz '70. Front row: Alyssa Brennhofer, Tehya Wachuta '21, Morgan Rentz, Wanda Rentz '72

THE BIG PICTURE

The first phase of the Morris Community Softball Complex, a partnership among the University of Minnesota Morris, Morris Area Schools, and the City of Morris, is complete, with two state-of-the-art softball fields to serve the needs of the area softball community, as well as a press box, restrooms, and concession stand. The project has been funded through the generous support of individuals, organizations, and community partners to provide life-changing athletic experiences for youth, student athletes, and families in the region.







Driscoll



Falkum

DRISCOLL '71 & FALKUM '80 EARN DISTINGUISHED ALUMNI AWARDS

John Driscoll '71 and Peter Falkum '80 are recipients of this year's University of Minnesota Morris Distinguished Alumni Award. Both exhibited distinguished service to the school and its students. Both Driscoll, Falkum and the 2020 honoree, James Odden '71, were recognized for their achievements during Homecoming 2021 held October 1-3, 2021

JOHN DRISCOLL

Driscoll graduated from UMN Morris in 1971 with degrees in history and art history and earned a PhD in art history from Pennsylvania State University. He was owner and director of Driscoll Babcock Galleries in New York City, selling and donating art to individuals and institutions across the nation.

John and his former wife and fellow alumna, Jeanne Baker Driscoll '69 were charter members of the Morris President's Club in 1998. According to Madeline Maxeiner, former Vice Chancellor, External Relations: "John and Jeanne remained devoted donors and actively engaged alumni despite their lack of proximity to the campus and the span of years since graduating. For example, as the Alumni Association founded the Morris Alumni Network, they were among the first volunteers to mentor students, offer career counseling, and return to campus for events. They believed wholeheartedly in the Morris mission and demonstrated that support both financially and in time spent."

ABOUT THE DISTINGUISHED ALUMNI AWARD

The Distinguished Alumni Award honors alumni who make noteworthy contributions in their professional lives, in public service, or in service to the University of Minnesota Morris. Learn more, including how to nominate an individual for this award, at alumni.morris.umn.edu.

PETER FALKUM

Falkum earned a biology degree in 1980 and went on to UMN Twin Cities for a masters in food science. His storied career has seen stints at General Mills, Dannon, and, most recently, Nielsen-Massey Vanillas. He played a key role in getting products such as Yoplait and the Silk line of dairy substitutes onto shelves. Van Gooch, professor emeritus of biology, says, "While at General Mills, Pete was asked if he had ideas to deal with the broken cereal bits that result when making Golden Grahams. Pete used this waste to develop a popular Golden Graham snack bar, turning an expensive waste into a multimillion dollar profit."

Falkum has contributed to UMN Morris scholarships and delivered the Joseph J. Latterell Memorial Visiting Alumnus Lecture in 2013. Gooch adds, "When I think of Pete Falkum, I think of the old saying of 'someone pulling themselves up by the bootstraps.' He was exceptional as a student and anxious to learn."



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alumni@morris.umn.edu
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JON DALAGER '79, UMMAA PRESIDENT

On behalf of the UMM Alumni Association, I would like to welcome the 2021 graduates to our ranks. Unlike some alumni associations, the UMMAA does not require annual dues and all alumni are automatically members. That means you can be active in the Alumni Association right now! Watch your email and the Alumni Relations website for upcoming events and opportunities.

As I reflect on the impact that UMM has had on me, other alumni, and the greater community, there is one program that stands out for me. In February 2021, UMM was named a Fulbright U.S. Student Program Top Producing Institution for the 2020-2021 year. The Fulbright Program, now celebrating its 75th Anniversary, was established in 1946 with an ambitious goal — to increase mutual understanding and support friendly and peaceful relations between the people of the United States and the people of other countries. The Fulbright program is highly competitive and yet UMM students keep winning awards. As a two-time Fulbright recipient, I might humbly add that many UMM Alumni are also recipients of the Fulbright Award. Why is that? Because UMM instills in its students the values of intellectual curiosity, global awareness, and a willingness to experience adventure. Best wishes to this year's Fulbright recipients and to all international travelers.

Finally, the Alumni Association Board will begin examining its role in the broader UMM community and will develop a strategic plan to achieve the goals identified by that process. If you have any ideas on how the UMM Alumni Association can better serve your needs and connect with you, the students, and the faculty and staff at UMM, please let us know by leaving a message through the Contact Us link on the Alumni Association web page (alumni.morris.umn.edu).

LEAVE YOUR MARK ON CAMPUS

Legacy Walk pavers and personalized Edson Auditorium seats are thoughtful gifts for a loved one who has a special connection to UMN Morris.



The Legacy Walk was created in 2007 as part of the ongoing beautification of campus. Pavers are personalized with the names of Morris alumni, faculty, staff, students, and friends. When you give a paver, your gift supports the Morris Legacy Walk and student scholarships.

z.umn.edu/MorrisLegacy

Edson Auditorium is at the heart of campus and holds a significant place in the hearts of UMN Morris and WCSA alumni. When you give a personalized Edson seat, you will create a legacy on the Morris campus and support the renovation of this space for current and future generations. You can personalize the engraved plaque on each seat with a name or a memory, or honor a loved one with an inscription.

z.umn.edu/EdsonAuditorium





Three graduates from the class of 1967, Leonard Hauptert, Alan Doty, and Ron Hains, got together for a luncheon in Saint Cloud in July. It was their first reunion in fifty years. Doty lives in Royalton, Hains lives in suburban Saint Paul, and Hauptert lives in Brevard, North Carolina. The three shared an apartment for two years and were all members of the Cougar wrestling team. All are retired and have active lifestyles.

Class of '67

Elroy Podratz graduated from UMN Morris in 1967 with a major in elementary education. After deciding that he wanted to become a school librarian, Podratz took two summers at the Twin Cities campus to earn a certification as a school librarian. He was hired in August of 1968 and spent 16 years as the librarian for the Wadena-Deer Creek Junior High and another 16 years as the elementary library media specialist in the same district. He retired in 2000 after 32 years of service.

Classes of '68 and '69

Richard Graves '68 received his BA in 1970 from NDSU in 1970, and **Mary Wiger Graves '69** got her RN license from St. Luke's in Fargo. They relocated to New Ulm, where Richard owned Design Home Center and Mary worked at the local hospital and obtained her BSN in nursing and her MSN in community health from MSUM Mankato. Eventually, she received her certificate as a health coach in the University of Minnesota and the Center for Spirituality's first nationally accredited cohort. Presently, they reside in Bernalillo, New Mexico, near their children and grandchildren.



A group of "olde Meiningens" recently got together for a cruise on the Mississippi. UMN Morris alumni present included Barb Roy '71, Bob Flynn '70, Doug Bakker '71, Linda Dahlen '72, Dennis Gimmestad '73



Mary Martin '75 recently self-published a lengthy family history book, *Mari Henriksdatter Sandvig: Reluctant Immigrant*, which traces the history and migration of her Norwegian great-grandmother and her descendants. The next volume traces the history of her Danish great-grandparents.

Class of '70

Kay Keskinen participated at the World Horseshoe Pitching Tournament hosted by the National Horseshoe Pitchers Association (NHPA) in July, 2021, at Winnemucca, Nevada. Keskinen received the NHPA Achievement Award for 2020. This award is made annually to those individuals who have been outstanding in their contributions to the sport on a local and/or statewide level. The selection is made by the NHPA Executive Council and recognizes Keskinen's service as the state newsletter editor and webmaster, along with her local work as a pitching coach, tournament director, and donor to the City of Moscow to upgrade horseshoe courts in two city parks.

Class of '72

James Jurgenson has been teaching in the Department of Biology at the University of Northern Iowa since 1992. Jurgenson and his wife Dori are also graduates of the University of Arizona. Jurgenson earned MS and PhD in genetics and Dori earned an MS in genetics. Jurgenson's research at UNI has been in the area of understanding how plant pathogenic fungi invade their hosts. This work has involved understanding the molecular mechanisms that fungi use to infect and applying modern molecular methods to develop ways to enable the host plants to become resistant to the pathogens. They have three children: Eric, a data analysis specialist with a PhD in physics from Ohio State, spouse Adrian, and their children Ethan, Hana, and Naomi; Mark, a classically trained opera singer who has just decided to go into K-12 teaching; and Ashlea, a licensed veterinary tech who has just started a new career and is attending pharmacy school.

Class of '73

Paul "Burke" Kiger is in his 13th year of retirement after 31 years working for the federal government. He met his wife Nancy Rose at UMN Morris. They will celebrate their 46th wedding anniversary this year. Burke has his MBA and Nancy has her PhD. They have three accomplished children: Jack who has an MA, Tom who has a PhD, and Katy who has an MA. They have also been blessed with six grandchildren. After retiring, Burke has spent his summers playing golf on the Senior Tour and in state



Mark Kraft '79 shared this photo from the Beta Sigma Psi Alumni Association's 10th annual golf outing.

championship events. He competed in more than 100 events, on 100 golf courses. His winter activities include reading, genealogy, puzzles, morning coffee group, traveling, and investment research. The pandemic mixed everything upside down. Frustrated by COVID, he intensified his investment strategy and wrote a poem about it: "Fools exit, leaving pile of cash, winnings." He now has written more than fifty poems and has been published. The poems are mostly memories and images that can never be erased, with some political events tossed in. He says, "It's a great feeling, to be able to express oneself, to write poems that explore, startle, surprise, and prod the reader." He tells his friends, "My experience at UMM set the foundation for my life."

Class of '78

Since leaving UMN Morris **Kevin Amin** has worked as a secondary school teacher and bank manager. He obtained an MBA from Rutgers Graduate School of Management. After working at the New York office for Arthur Andersen, Chase Bank, Citibank, Automatic Data Processing, and PSEG, Kevin became owner of a certified public accountant firm based in New Jersey. He is a father of eight, with eight grandchildren.



Alana Petersen '91 recently visited campus with son Dylan.

Class of '80

Mike (Shoey) Schumacher has been coaching softball at Wabasha-Kellogg High School for 41 years. In June 2021 the team advanced to the state high school tournament.

Class of '97

David Leflar recently stepped down from his role as President and CEO of Gradient Securities and accepted a new position, joining the senior management team of Twin Cities Financial Group (a firm affiliated with Prudential Advisors) as Regional Director. He is looking forward to leveraging his prior experience to support new and experienced advisors in the firm. David lives in Plymouth with his wife **Jennifer Myhr Leflar '95** and their sons Ben, Zack, and Nate. They keep active supporting their boys' activities in sports, Scouts, and the performing arts.



Sarah Sorenson-Wagner '99 and Mark Sorenson-Wagner '99 and their family visited campus in March.



Drew Larrabee '00 poses with daughters Skylar and Adriana near the Science Buildings's dinosaur skull replica, which he helped build during an internship in South Dakota. Larrabee is a principal in Tok, Alaska. Skylar and Adriana are attending UMN Morris this fall.



Ryan Turgeon '05 graduated from the United States Naval Test Pilot School (USNTPS) in January after completing the fixed wing test engineer course. USNTPS is an intense 11-month course consisting of academic course work, flight training, and report writing.

Class of '00

Neil Mattson has been awarded the Rising Star Faculty Award for 2020 by the Cornell University College of Agriculture and Life Sciences Alumni Association. Mattson has been at Cornell University since 2007 and is currently an associate professor and greenhouse extension specialist in horticulture, with his research interests including strategies to reduce greenhouse energy use, LED lighting, sustainable and organic fertilization practices, and plant abiotic stress physiology. He and wife **Janelle Alvstad-Mattson** '00 live in Ithaca, New York, with their children Nellia and Dylan.

Class of '04

Sara Mennen, MS, LMFT, RPT was recruited by the Minnesota Autism Center (MAC) to be the second Clinical Supervisor of the Southwest Region of Minnesota. She joined MAC in April 2021. Mennen was also accepted as a board member in April 2021 for the Committee Against Domestic Abuse (CADA) for a term of three years. This organization provides resources for those impacted by domestic violence and sexual assault over a nine county area.

Class of '14

Emily Irey Jesser graduated from the University of Minnesota with a PhD in cancer biology. Her lab primarily studied breast cancer. She is now working for Abbott Laboratories in clinical research.



A few of the UMN Morris faculty, staff, and alumni present at the 2021 Tallgrass Prairie BioBlitz at Lac qui Parle State Park & Wildlife Management Area are pictured here. Front row: Anne Borgendale '04, Associate Professor of Biology Margaret Kuchenreuther, Sonya Kopet Glysen, Associate Professor of Biology Tracey Anderson. Back row: Director of Sustainability Troy Goodnough, Aaron Goemann '14, Terry VanDerPol '74, Assistant Professor of Biology Miriam Gieske.



Nancy Carpenter, professor emeritus of chemistry, hosted an informal backyard get-together at her new home in Northfield this summer. Professor James Togeas was a special guest, along with UMN Morris chemistry students and alumni now living near Northfield.

PASSING THE TORCH OF THE SMALL LIBERAL ARTS COLLEGE EXPERIENCE: THREE UMN MORRIS ALUMNI TEACH AT THE UNIVERSITY OF DUBUQUE

by Brian Hallstoos '95, Nolan Hauta '08, and Adam Hoffman '01



Hauta, Hoffman, and Hallstoos

Although they teach different disciplines—history, music, and chemistry—their stories all have one thing in common: their experiences at UMN Morris helped shape them into the educators they are today.

Brian (Stoos) Hallstoos '95 is from the Twin Cities area. Through his journey from UMN Morris to the University of Dubuque he remains committed to keeping life interesting and meaning-filled. He majored in history because of his deep respect for the subject matter. Professors Guyotte, Frenier, Ahern, Hinds, Giannuli, and Gross helped him to think critically and supported his interdisciplinary spirit by co-advising him on seminar projects. Hallstoos found special support from Joel Eisinger, who influenced his attending graduate school in art history. He later earned a PhD in American studies. Singing with the Concert Choir and other groups instilled the virtue of listening to and learning from others and trusting that hard work pays off. Hallstoos's time at the KUMM radio station; in intramural basketball, softball, and flag football; and on the sand volleyball courts reminded him how much good mental health depends on staying active. UMN Morris also introduced him to **Sharon (Hall) Hallstoos '95**. Their lives revolve around their offspring Tatum (22), Elise (17), and Joplin (15).

Nolan Hauta '08 is from Cook. At UMN Morris he majored in music. Hauta appreciated the professors from many

The University of Dubuque has three University of Minnesota Morris alumni on its faculty. How did this school of approximately 2,000 students become home to so many UMN Morris alumni?

disciplines who gave freely of their time and who established meaningful bonds with their students. Hauta's most influential mentors include Jim "Doc" Carlson '65 and Ken Hodgson. Today he enjoys establishing rapport and making connections with his own students. He cherishes memories of music-making with the UMN Morris concert band, jazz ensembles, choir, and orchestra. At the University of Dubuque Hauta teaches concert band, jazz history, and lessons for trombone, euphonium, tuba, guitar, and jazz improvisation. He previously taught the jazz ensemble and pep band. Hauta was last at the Morris campus in 2017 to play with the Alumni Jazzers at Jazz Fest. He lives in Dubuque, Iowa, with his wife Amanda and sons Hugo (4) and Milo (2). Nolan's advice for current UMN Morris students comes from his dad, Gary Hauta, who shared a *carpe diem* message: "Look around. Be proud. Stand tall. You did this. You got yourself here."

Adam Hoffman '01 grew up in Belle Plaine. He fondly recalls his time at the Morris campus, including residing in Gay Hall 1-1, writing for the *University Register*, making life-long friends, studying abroad, student-faculty research, and collecting intramural championship t-shirts. Two UMN Morris professors in particular, Tracey Anderson and Nancy Carpenter, motivated Adam to utilize science to answer questions about the natural world, pointing him on his path to graduate school, studying environmental chemistry at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. Travel to Sweden through a semester-long study abroad program as a senior at UMN Morris set the stage for a long-term connection, including a recent sabbatical spent studying water quality in Sweden and a Sustainability in Sweden travel course that Adam teaches every other year. UMN Morris started Hoffman on a path of life-long learning, and he implores students at the University of Dubuque to take advantage of the personal relationships they can build at small liberal arts colleges by connecting with professors, peers, and the community around them. Hoffman resides in Dubuque, Iowa, with his wife Megan, daughter Madeline (14), and son Alton (11).



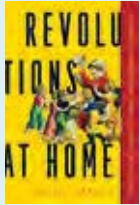
Molly Kloek Goodfellow '07 and Bobby Goodfellow '07 welcomed a child in 2020. Bobby is a nurse practitioner at the Shock Trauma Center in Baltimore, Maryland. Molly is an assistant clinical professor at the University of Maryland-College Park.



Sarah Deutl Maurer '11 and husband Dave welcomed their first child—Mason—in November of 2020...something very good to come out of the year!

RECENT PUBLICATIONS

BY UMN MORRIS AUTHORS AND EDITORS



Emily Bruce

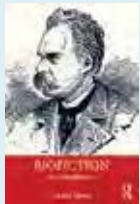
assistant professor of history, German studies, and GWSS

Revolutions at Home: The Origin of Modern Childhood and the German Middle Class
(University of Massachusetts Press, 2021)



Joyce Lacey '97

The Experts Cure: How Entrepreneurs Are Changing the World
(Best Seller Publishing, LLC, 2021)



Michael Lackey

Professor of English

Biofiction: An Introduction
(Routledge, 2022)



Kristina Lahr '12

Candle's Great Feast
(Luminare Press, 2021)



Samuel J. Redman '05

Prophets and Ghosts: The Story of Salvage Anthropology
(Harvard University Press, 2021)

**HAVE YOU PUBLISHED
A BOOK RECENTLY?
LET US KNOW!**
alumni@morris.umn.edu



Maria Brun Gingras '08 and her husband Drew are excited to announce that they are anticipating their first child in late January. They are expecting a daughter and couldn't be happier! To add to the list of big life changes, Maria started a new job working for Southwest Power Pool as a Senior Market Monitor. In her role, she combines many of the skills she gained at UMN

Morris, including forensic economics and statistics, as well as her love for electric markets to analyze the behavior of different energy companies and detect potential market inefficiencies and fraud. She particularly enjoys working on projects related to renewable energy integration.



Christine Hoffman '13 completed her PhD in applied mathematics from the University of California, Merced in August 2020 under the direction of advisor Dr. Boaz Ilan. In June 2020, Christine and her husband Rafay, along with proud grandparents Marcia Olson Hoffman '74 and Glenn Hoffman, welcomed baby Daniel.



Send us your Class Notes.

Please include high resolution photos!

Office of Alumni Relations, Welcome Center
600 E 4th St, Morris, MN 56267
alumni@morris.umn.edu or
alumni.morris.umn.edu/submit-class-note

Next Class Notes Deadline: January 15, 2022

In a year unlike any other in the history of college athletics, the Cougars were able to resume competition in January 2021. Because of the hiatus in competitions in the fall, most sports competed in the spring, and 17 teams competed in a span of four months. Though seasons were shortened to fit into the condensed time frame, the Cougars enjoyed many successes and the 2021–22 year has started with great energy and enthusiasm.

FOOTBALL

The two games that Cougar football was able to play in April provided a glimpse into the future, as a number of newcomers played vital roles. Quarterback Marcus Reeb '24 had a good connection with wideouts Dylan Naughton '23 and Garrett Elison '24. Elison also led the Cougars in rushing over the two games and found paydirt both on the ground and through the air. Two other first-years—Hunter Infanger '24 and Boden Sperr '24—had key roles on defense. Infanger had nearly double the tackles (27) of anyone else on the team, while Sperr forced a fumble and recovered two. Connor Oldenburg '21 was later named a CoSIDA Second Team Academic All-American for his work both on the field and in the classroom.



Connor Oldenburg



Sam Tate

WOMEN'S SOCCER

The women's soccer team had a successful first season under new head coach Bianca Keil, finishing with an overall record of 6-5-0. A fast start to the year propelled the Cougars to a third-place finish in the UMAC regular season standings with Sam Tate '21 and Monica Calderon '23 combining for 17 goals. Both Tate and Calderon were named First Team All-UMAC at the conclusion of

the year, as was defender Jay Kwateh '23. Caroline O'Donnell '23 and Harper Toward '23 were each Second Team All-UMAC honorees, while Emma Giere '24 was an Honorable Mention All-UMAC selection. Like the men's team, the women played their home matches at Big Cat Stadium this past spring, but return to Cougar Field for 10 matches in the 2021 campaign.

MEN'S SOCCER

The midfield play of Devon Thompson '21 (Second Team All-UMAC) and Carter Watkinson '23 (Honorable Mention All-UMAC) helped the Cougars to a 3-5-1 finish in a season in which the team played all of its home matches at Big Cat Stadium. UMN

Morris had shutouts from Jake Peterson '21 in all three victories, which came over Northwestern, Crown, and North Central. Late dramatics came into play in the season-opening victory over Northwestern, when Corbin McCall '21 scored a golden goal in double-overtime to defeat the Eagles. The Cougars are back on their usual home turf for the 2021 season and will host 11 regular-season contests.



Carter Watkinson

MEN'S GOLF

After posting a massive improvement this past spring, the Cougar men's golf team was given the Mark Laesch Award by the Golf Coaches Association of America (GCAA) for the largest improvement in all of NCAA Division III for adjusted stroke average per round from 2019-20 to 2020-21. The Cougars finished seventh as a team at the UMAC Championship, a jump of two spots from the previous conference championship in the fall of 2019. Much of that improvement can be attributed to Brady Raph '24, who finished as the tournament's runner-up with a three-round score of 225. That effort earned him First Team All-UMAC honors, while Orion Collins '22 tied for ninth individually and was an Honorable Mention All-UMAC pick.



Brady Raph



Payton Sierra

WOMEN'S GOLF

The women's golf team performed well in a short spring season, ending as the runner-up in one tournament and in third place in two others, including the UMAC Championship. The Cougars were led by First Team All-UMAC selection Payton Sierra '22, who finished 10th at the conference championship. Two others—Tori Grates '23 and Shelby Maloney '23—were both Honorable Mention All-UMAC. Golf quickly returned to action this fall, hosting a pair of tournaments in the lead-up to the UMAC Championship, held October 7-9 in Becker.

VOLLEYBALL

For the eighth season in a row, the UMAC Tournament Championship match came down to a meeting between the Cougars and the University of Northwestern Eagles. The Eagles were able to top the Cougars in straight sets this time around, but the stakes are raised heading into 2021, as a berth to the NCAA Tournament will once again be on the line. The Cougars ended the season with an overall record of 6-5 with four players earning All-UMAC honors. Tori Everson '21 and UMAC Rookie of the Year McKenzie Newton '24 were on the First Team, while Maggie Jones '23 and Alyssa Ukestad '22 were Second Teamers.



McKenzie Newton



Lexus Eagle Chasing

WOMEN'S BASKETBALL

Behind the scoring prowess of Lexus Eagle Chasing '22 (second in the UMAC at 17.3 ppg), the Cougar women's basketball team ended with a record of 6-4, falling in the semifinals of the UMAC Tournament. Eagle Chasing was a First Team All-UMAC selection, while one of her backcourt mates, Jadyn Sondrol '23, was Honorable Mention All-UMAC.

Dual-sport athlete Jay Kwateh '23 was named to the UMAC All-Defensive Team. Malory Anderson '24 provided a spark off the bench, averaging 8.7 points and 8.1 rebounds. With all but one player back from last year's team, the Cougars should once again be considered one of the favorites in the UMAC in 2021-22.



Alex Baumann

BASEBALL

Following a very abbreviated first season in charge in 2020, Head Coach Matt O'Brien was able to lead his team through a full season in 2021, ending with a record of 7-23 in a year that saw the Cougars shift their home field north of campus to Chizek Field. Alex Baumann '23 terrorized opposing pitchers throughout the year, ending as a First Team All-UMAC selection after hitting .320 with five doubles and three

home runs in 26 games. Evan Benson '23 was a table-setter for Baumann at the top of the batting order, hitting .330 and recording an on-base percentage of .460 on his way to being an Honorable Mention All-UMAC choice. Brian Vanyo '22 led the pitching corps with a 3-5 record, striking out 42 in 47.2 innings.



MEN'S BASKETBALL

Paced by the play of Honorable Mention All-UMAC selections Dillon Haider '22 and Jaret Johnson '23, the Cougar men's basketball team ended their season with a record of 4-6. Haider averaged 16.2 points per game and shot better than 43 percent from behind the arc, pouring in 31 in a big 115-86 home win over Bethany Lutheran. Johnson was second on the Cougars in scoring at 12.5 points per game and grabbed a team-best 6.2 rebounds per game, shooting over 51 percent from the floor. With only one senior on last year's roster, the Cougars should be primed to contend in the UMAC this season.



Lydia Mann

SOFTBALL

The middle-of-the-order duo of Lydia Mann '21 and Tori Nichols-Kraft '24 combined for 17 doubles, eight triples, and six home runs to help the softball team finish the year at 10-22. Both Mann and Nichols-Kraft were First Team All-UMAC picks in 2021, while Morgan Mathews '21 found a spot on the UMAC All-Defensive Team for her work in center field. Exciting changes are ahead in 2022 and beyond for the Cougar program as a collaboration between UMN Morris and the Morris community has seen the construction of a new softball complex right next to Cougar Diamond, providing a new state-of-the-art home in the years ahead.



WOMEN'S SWIMMING & DIVING

With the exception of the cross country teams, who were not able to compete in 2020-21, no team had a shorter season than women's swimming and diving. The whole competition season consisted of a single home meet against visiting Concordia College, a meet the Cougars won by a score of 140-108. At the one meet, Senior Day was celebrated for the six-member Class of 2021, featuring Abi Fountain, Taryn Longshore, Nora Lund, Liz Melssen, Sierra Walker, and Tatiana Walker-Rozo. The Cougars eagerly await a more complete 2021-22 season and a return to the Liberal Arts Championships in February.



MEN'S INDOOR TRACK & FIELD

With Justin Robinson '22 leading the way, the men's indoor track and field team finished third at the UMAC Championships. Robinson earned his All-UMAC honors by winning both the weight throw and the shot put, setting a school record in the weight throw in the process. Cody Nye '23 was also All-UMAC in the shot put and Grant Strukel '24 earned All-UMAC honors by finishing as the runner-up in the 3,000 Meters.

MEN'S OUTDOOR TRACK & FIELD



Cody Nye '23 (shot put) and Luke Petersen '22 (hammer throw) were conference champions as the men's outdoor track and field team finished fifth at the UMAC Championships. Throws were the strength this season for the Cougars.

Four of the top six finishers in the shot put came from UMN Morris, with Alex Boyd '23 finishing third, Bryan Zepeda '23 finishing fifth, and Justin Robinson '22 finishing sixth. Things were even more clustered for the Cougars in the hammer throw, with six of the top eight finishers. Trailing behind Petersen was Robinson in second, Boyd in third, Jerad Nelson '22 in sixth, Zepeda in seventh, and Nye in eighth.



WOMEN'S INDOOR TRACK & FIELD

Under the leadership of UMAC Coach of the Year Josh Kuusisto and with Field Athlete of the Meet Jessica Bliese '21 supplying victories in the weight throw and shot put, the Cougars dethroned Saint Scholastica and won their first-ever UMAC title at the UMAC Indoor Track and Field Championships. The Cougars also had victories from Jenna Benson '22 (long jump), McKenna Langerud '23 (5,000 meters), and Jasmine Terry '22 (high jump). Though there was no NCAA Indoor Championship Meet, Bliese went on to compete in the Division III Elite Indoor Track and Field Championships and finished sixth nationally in the weight throw.

WOMEN'S OUTDOOR TRACK & FIELD

Though there was no 2020 UMAC champion, the Cougar women's track and field team "repeated" as conference champ in 2021 after laying claim to that title in 2019. Josh Kuusisto was once again named UMAC Coach of the Year, and Jessica Bliese '21 was UMAC Field Athlete of the Meet. Bliese earned All-UMAC honors for her event victories in the hammer throw and javelin, as did Hailey Gill '23 in the shot put and discus, Jenna Benson '22 in the long jump, and the 4 x 800 meter relay team of Maddie Fenske '21, Kaitlyn Ladwig '22, McKenna Langerud '23, and Alexa Yeager '21. Bliese and Jenica Moes '22 qualified for the NCAA Division III Outdoor Track and Field Championships, with Moes finishing 19th nationally in the javelin and Bliese ending her career with the Cougars as an All-American following a fifth-place finish nationally in the hammer throw.





Paul Decker

MEN'S TENNIS

The men's tennis team finished its season at 4-8 before falling in the UMAC quarterfinals. Nick Garmen '23 was a standout for the Cougars, finishing with 3-3 records in singles at both the No. 1 and No. 2 positions. Paul Decker '23 picked up All-UMAC honors for his play alternating between the No. 3, No. 4, and No. 5 positions in the singles lineup. Garmen and Decker teamed up five times on the season in doubles and put together a 3-2 record, including a 3-1 record in UMAC matches.



Kiley Rodarmel

WOMEN'S TENNIS

A stellar season for the women's tennis team ended in the UMAC semifinals, but the Cougars set a single-season school record for victories along the way, ending at 9-4 overall and in third place in the UMAC regular-season standings. Though the Cougars will miss the contributions of All-UMAC performer Sam Tate '21, three other All-UMAC performers will be back for the team as Megan Arens '23, Kate Obright '22, and Kiley Rodarmel '24 look to keep the momentum going in the spring. Arens and Obright each had 10 singles wins on the season, while Rodarmel split her eight singles wins evenly between the No. 1 and No. 3 positions in the singles lineup.

COUGAR CLUB

The Cougar Club provides opportunities for nearly 400 Cougar athletes and 19 athletic teams.



To learn more and join, visit z.umn.edu/CougarClub



COUGAR GOLF CLASSIC 2021

Alumni, friends, family members, and coaches gathered for day of fun and fellowship in support of Cougar Athletics. Plan to join us next summer!



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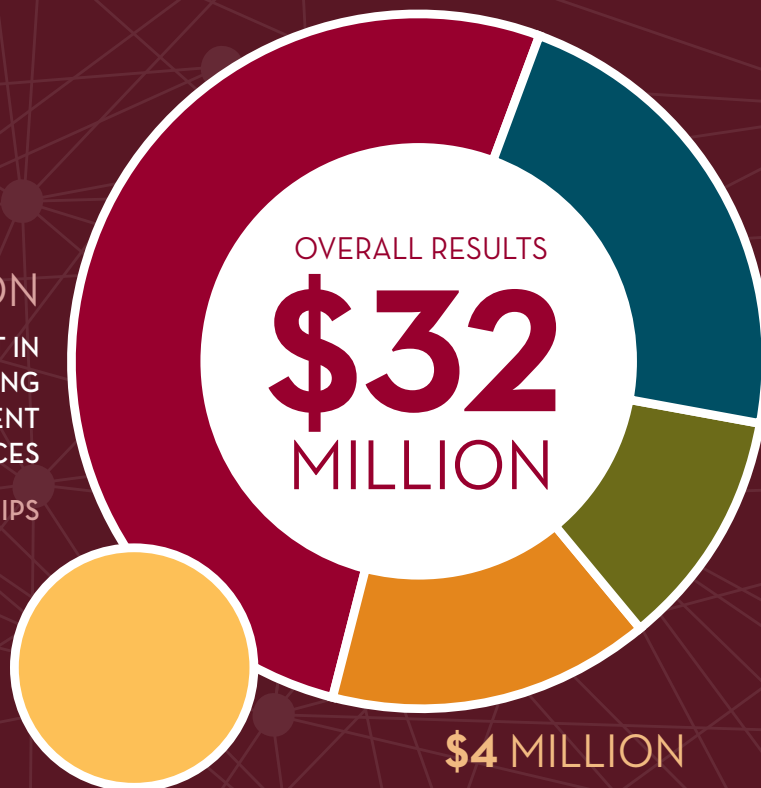
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Follow us!



Good boy, Archie! Campus therapy dog Archie passed his Therapy Dog Certification Test in July and has been out and about, bringing joy to all on campus this semester.